GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5326
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FARMER CALL CENTRE
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of farmer call centres functioning in the country, State-wise, particularly in Jharkhand; and

(b) the steps taken by the farmers to ensure that such centres provide adequate information to the farmers?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a): Kisan Call Centres (KCC) are functioning in 14 locations of the country. The list of 14 Centres and the States covered by each Centre is annexed (Annexure-I). At present Jharkhand State is being served through the Kisan Call Centre located at Kolkata. However establishing a Kisan Call Centre at Ranchi to serve the farmers of Jharkhand exclusively is in process, as part of the Government of India decision to expand the KCC to 28 locations from the existing 14.

(b): The steps taken by the Government to ensure that such centres provide adequate information to the farmers are as under:

(i) At present 144 Cell Center Agents are engaged in 14 KCCs who are answering farmers'queries in 21 local dialects.

(ii) In case Call Centre agents (at level I) are not able to completely answer the farmers queries, calls are escalated to level II,(128 in number,nationwide) where experts from Agricultural Universities answer farmers queries directly. Out of 128 L II Experts,2 are located in Jharkhand State.

(iii) 20 Nodal Officers designated by the Government of India are keeping liaison with the Call Centre agents for providing technical support for running the Kisan Call Centres.

(iv) Besides, Department of Agriculture & Cooperation has also taken initiative to develop a data structure in the form of Kisan Knowledge Management System (KKMS) and software is being developed to provide data-bank on various packages of practices on Crops, Horticulture, Poultry, Fishery, Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Sciences. The data structure is designed to support the Kisan Call Centre as an information bank. KKMS facilitates Kisan Call Centre agents to provide correct answers to the farmers' queries instantly.

(v) In order to monitor the activities of Kisan Call Centres, a State level Monitoring Committee (SLMC) has been constituted under the chairmanship of Secretary (Agri.) with Director Agriculture and allied Deptts.,representatives of local BSNL office and concerned nodal officer of KCC as members to address the issues related with training programmes, publicity and connectivity.Besides,it also ascertains the authenticity and accuracy of answers of KCC agents given to farmers' queries.

(vi) To make the toll-free number '1551',popular among the farmers, publicity is being done through various means like printed post cards, inland letters and local publicity through ATMA at district and block level.